

Secure Rural School Act: Resource Advisory Committees

The Secure Rural Schools Act authorizes the use of Resource Advisory Committee (RACs) as a mechanism for local community collaboration with federal land managers in recommending Title II projects on federal lands or that will benefit resources on federal lands. RACs established by the original SRS Act and in existence before September 29, 2006, have been reappointed by the Secretary of Agriculture to a new four-year term.

Officers and Membership

- Each RAC consists of 15 members appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. Committee members shall be representative of the interests of the following three categories:

Category A

- Organized labor or non-timber forest product harvester groups
- Developed outdoor recreation, off highway vehicle users, or commercial recreation activities;
- Energy and mineral development interests; or commercial or recreational fishing interests
- Commercial timber industry
- Federal grazing or other land use permittee or represent nonindustrial private forest land owners, within the area for which the RAC is organized

Category B

- Nationally recognized environmental organizations
- Regionally or locally recognized environmental organizations
- Dispersed recreational activities
- Archaeological and historical interests
- Nationally or regionally recognized wild horse and burro interest groups, wildlife or hunting organizations, or watershed associations

Category C

- State elected official or their designee
- County or local elected official
- American Indian tribes within or adjacent to committee area
- School officials or teachers
- Represent the affected public at large.

- RAC members shall serve a four-year term.
- If a RAC member fails to attend (in person or by telephonic or electronic means) two consecutive official meetings, the Secretary may remove that member from the RAC.
- The Secretary shall appoint one replacement for each membership category. Should a vacancy occur, the replacement shall be available to fill the vacancy immediately. Replacement members may not vote until moved up to fill vacancy and serve as a RAC member.
- Equal opportunity practices, in line with USDA policies, shall be followed in all membership appointments to the committee. To ensure that the recommendations of the committee have taken into account the needs of the diverse groups served by the Department, membership shall include, to the extent practicable, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.
- A vacancy on a RAC shall be filled in the manner of the original appointment. Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which his/her predecessor was appointed shall be appointed for the remainder of such term. A replacement shall fill the vacancy as soon as practicable after the vacancy occurs.
- RAC Members shall reside within the State or States in which the RAC has jurisdiction. To the extent practicable, each of the three categories shall be composed of local representatives.
- A Chairperson is elected by the RAC from among its members for a term of one year.